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United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report contains an account of the activities undertaken by the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa from July 2016 to June 2017.

During the reporting period, the Regional Centre continued to assist Member States, at their request, and intergovernmental and civil society organizations in Africa to promote peace, security, disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation.

In response to the continued challenge to peace, security and stability posed by the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons in the region, in particular in Central Africa and the Sahel, the Regional Centre focused its work on providing assistance to Member States to control small arms and light weapons through capacity-building for civilian authorities, including national commissions on small arms and light weapons, defence and security forces and United Nations peacekeeping mission personnel in combating illicit small arms and light weapons. The Centre supported States in preventing the diversion of such weapons, in particular to non-State armed groups and terrorist groups, pursuant to Security Council resolution 2178 (2014). It also provided assistance in the implementation of instruments relating to weapons of mass destruction, including the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, as well as Council resolution 1540 (2004). The Centre partnered with the African Union, subregional organizations, civil society organizations and other United Nations entities.

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The Regional Centre continued to provide substantive support on disarmament issues to the States members of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa at their ministerial and governmental expert meetings.

The Regional Centre also implemented its communication strategy by developing information and outreach material and by proactively reaching out to stakeholders, including through commemorative activities to help to promote peace and disarmament in Africa.

The Secretary-General expresses his gratitude to those Member States, in particular Togo, as host country of the Centre, and other institutions that made financial and in-kind contributions to the Regional Centre, enabling it to fulfil its mandate during the reporting period, and calls upon all Member States and other stakeholders to continue to make contributions.

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 71/76, the General Assembly commended the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa for its sustained support to Member States over the past 30 years in implementing disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation activities through seminars and conferences, capacity-building and training, policy and technical expertise, and information and advocacy at the global, regional and national levels.

2. The present report, submitted pursuant to the request contained in that resolution for the Secretary-General to submit a report at its seventy-second session on the implementation of the resolution, covers the activities of the Regional Centre from July 2016 to June 2017. The financial statement of the Trust Fund for the Centre for 2016 is contained in the annex.

II. Functioning and mandate

3. The Regional Centre was established in 1986 in Lomé pursuant to General Assembly resolution 40/151 G. The Centre functions on the basis of existing resources within the Secretariat and of voluntary contributions from Member States and other donors.

4. During the reporting period, the Regional Centre implemented its programme of work in the following main areas: peace and security; conventional arms, including small arms and light weapons; weapons of mass destruction; information and outreach; and cooperation and partnerships with regional and subregional organizations, and other entities.

III. Objectives and activities

5. The Regional Centre provides support and technical assistance to Member States in Africa, at their request, in the promotion of disarmament, peace and security through capacity-building and training programmes, advocacy, research and information sharing. It works in partnership with the African Union and African regional organizations, other intergovernmental organizations, academic and research institutions and civil society organizations in the implementation of its programmes, projects and other activities. In the light of the specific nature of security and disarmament issues in Africa, the Centre continued to place emphasis on activities aimed at preventing the illicit trafficking in and proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

6. The Regional Centre continued to raise the awareness of African Member States of issues relating to weapons of mass destruction, in particular by assisting in implementing disarmament and non-proliferation instruments, such as the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction and Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery to non-State actors.

A. Peace and security

7. The Regional Centre worked with the African Union Commission to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular Sustainable Development Goal 16 and targets 16.1, on the reduction of violence and

16.4, on the reduction of illicit flows of arms. The Centre also engaged with the Commission in supporting the African Union aspiration to "silence the guns by 2020", in accordance with Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, and the master road map of practical steps to silence the guns in Africa by the year 2020 ("Lusaka master road map 2016").

8. The Regional Centre continued to contribute to the implementation of the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel through the provision of technical assistance to improve small arms control and the physical security and stockpile management of such weapons. The Centre also actively participated in inter-agency discussions on and the review of the integrated strategy, led by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa and the Sahel, in order to align it to the current challenges of the region. In that context, the Centre continued to provide expert advice to Member States, United Nations missions and other stakeholders on issues relating to disarmament in general and weapons stockpile management, safety and security across the subregion.

9. The Regional Centre provided substantive support to the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa at its forty-third and forty-fourth ministerial meetings, held in Sao Tome in November 2016 and in Yaoundé in June 2017, respectively. The Centre updated the 11 States members of the Committee on developments in the field of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation at the international, regional and subregional levels and on international and regional efforts in promoting and supporting the implementation of disarmament instruments.

10. Member States noted with appreciation the tangible achievements of the Regional Centre and the impact of the assistance that it provided to Central African States in the implementation of the Central African Convention for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and All Parts and Components That Can Be Used for Their Manufacture, Repair and Assembly (Kinshasa Convention). The Centre had provided legal, policy and technical assistance to Member States of the Central African subregion during the drafting of the Convention. On 8 March 2017, the Kinshasa Convention entered into force, following its ratification by Angola. On 23 March 2017, Sao Tome ratified the Convention. This is a testament to the collective commitment of the 11 States members of the Committee to preventing and eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and reducing the human suffering that they cause in the subregion and in Africa as a whole.

11. The Regional Centre participated in the annual meeting of heads of United Nations field presences in the Central African region organized by the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa and held in Libreville on 23 and 24 March 2017. Participants at the meeting assessed the prevailing peace and security challenges facing the region, including the illicit proliferation of and trafficking in small arms and light weapons. They welcomed the entry into force of the Kinshasa Convention and called for its ratification by the remaining States and support for its effective implementation by all relevant United Nations entities. The United Nations is preparing for the first Conference of States Parties to the Kinshasa Convention, to be held within one year of its entry into force.

12. The Regional Centre continued to examine the adverse consequences of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons on maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea. The Centre and other United Nations agencies participated in the activities of the African Union Extraordinary Summit on Maritime Security and Safety and Development in Africa, held in Lomé on 15 October 2016. The Centre prepared a paper contributing to the emerging discourse on enhancing maritime security in

Africa and providing an overview of the challenges, conceptual definitions and international instruments concerning maritime security in the continent.

13. On 23 November 2016, the Regional Centre was invited to address the meeting of heads of defence forces of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in Lomé. The Centre briefed participants on the ongoing projects and outlined possible areas of future cooperation with ECOWAS.

B. Small arms and light weapons

14. The Regional Centre supported African Member States in implementing global and regional instruments to combat the illicit trade in and proliferation of small arms and light weapons by providing assistance in implementing regional and national action plans and in strengthening the capacity of Governments and civil society organizations. The Centre provided support to the African Union and African regional economic communities in the implementation of the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and Other Related Materials, the Kinshasa Convention and the Nairobi Protocol for the Prevention, Control and Reduction of Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa, as well as Agenda 2063. In this regard, particular efforts were directed towards supporting legislative reform to assist countries in developing national legal frameworks on small arms and light weapons. The Centre also supported countries in developing the appropriate national coordination mechanisms in accordance with the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. It also supported the improvement of the physical security and management of governmental weapons stockpiles and the application of the International Small Arms Control Standards and the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines.

15. As an observer member of the African Union-Regions Steering Committee on Small Arms and Light Weapons and Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration, the Regional Centre continued to work closely with the African Union and the African regional economic communities, in particular by providing expertise to the seventh and eighth meetings of the Steering Committee, held in Djibouti in October 2016 and in Ethiopia in May 2017, respectively. The meetings provided an opportunity to reflect on and draw lessons from the challenges and achievements of national, subregional and regional small arms control efforts and to discuss how the Steering Committee could further improve coordination, effectiveness and sustainability. The Centre also made a presentation on its activities and outlined its priorities for the year ahead.

16. On 23 November 2016, Regional Centre experts and security officials from the Ministry of Security of Togo attended a one-day training course in Lomé on the International Small Arms Control Standards and the related assessment tool.

17. The Regional Centre participated in discussions at the International Workshop on the Safe and Secure Management of Ammunition, which was held in Geneva on 8 and 9 December 2016 by the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland. The Workshop provided a platform for discussions on the safe and secure management of ammunition, in particular on the challenges regarding implementing international standards on ammunition management.

18. On 10 February 2017, the Regional Centre attended a steering committee meeting of the European Union-African Union project "Fight against the illicit accumulation and trafficking of firearms in Africa" held in Mombasa, Kenya. At the

meeting, participants reviewed progress achieved under the project. The African Union briefed the committee on the Lusaka master road map 2016.

19. As part of its contribution to implementing the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel, the Regional Centre continued to coordinate the implementation of a three-year project to improve the physical security and stockpile management of weapons to reduce the risk of diversion of small arms and light weapons and ammunition, as well as accidental explosions at ammunition sites. The project is supported by the European Union and covers six countries in the Sahel: Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Nigeria.

20. Within the framework of the aforementioned project, in collaboration with national authorities, the Regional Centre organized a national consultation workshop in Mauritania in April 2017 that brought together 28 participants representing diverse stakeholders, including government ministries, State security agencies and civil society organizations, to discuss the proliferation of small and light weapons. The Centre conducted a review of small arms-related legislation in the six beneficiary countries. It also assisted the national commissions on small arms of Mali and Burkina Faso in the organization of legal drafting workshops in August 2016 and March 2017, respectively, to review draft legislation before submission to the legislature. In cooperation with the Presidential Committee on Small Arms and Light Weapons of Nigeria, a national consultative workshop was held in Abuja from 2 to 4 August 2016, with over 30 participants in attendance. The Centre held consultations with federal government representatives, members of the armed forces and the civil society on project implementation in Nigeria, including the selection of three arms storage facilities for piloting physical security and stockpile management of weapons procedures.

21. The Regional Centre organized a regional workshop in Lomé in November 2016 on physical security and stockpile management of weapons procedures, bringing together 32 participants from government ministries, security agencies and civil society in the six beneficiary countries. They were joined by experts from ECOWAS, the Regional Centre on Small Arms in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and Bordering States and the Group of Five for the Sahel to discuss the findings of the national consultations organized by the Centre and share experiences on physical security and stockpile management of weapons and small arms and light weapons control. Participants also reviewed the results of the study on arms control legislation carried out by the Centre in the beneficiary countries.

22. In order to improve States' capacities to prevent the diversion and acquisition of arms by non-State armed groups, including terrorist groups, the Regional Centre supported the implementation of Security Council resolution 2178 (2014) on the elimination of conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism. That support was provided within the framework of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force. The Centre, in collaboration with ECOWAS, held a national experts meeting on subregional cross-border cooperation in the control of small arms and light weapons under existing regional and subregional instruments on 4 and 5 August 2016. The meeting, attended by 52 representatives from Cameroon, Chad, the Niger and Nigeria, was aimed at strengthening subregional efforts in the area of judicial and military cooperation to prevent the acquisition of small arms and light weapons by terrorists in the four beneficiary States. It provided a first platform for stakeholders to identify gaps in the legislative and judicial systems dealing with international cooperation in small arms control at both the national and regional levels.

23. Under the same initiative, the Regional Centre, in collaboration with the Government of Cameroon, the Subregional Centre for Human Rights and

Democracy in Central Africa and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) organized a capacity-building workshop in Yaoundé from 24 to 28 January 2017 to train national security sector trainers in the fight against illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons. That workshop also benefited the four Lake Chad Basin States and brought together 37 national and international experts on improving cross-border and subregional cooperation for the control of trafficking in small arms and light weapons in relation to existing regional and subregional instruments.

24. The Regional Centre has been working with the Government of Togo to develop a new project that aims to support the marking of weapons, the rehabilitation of stockpile facilities and the destruction of surplus, obsolete or illicit weapons, their ammunition and other related materials. In response to requests for assistance from the Governments of Cameroon and Madagascar, the Centre is developing project proposals on technical assistance and capacity-building in practical disarmament.

25. In February 2017, the Regional Centre published the "Assessment survey on small arms in the Sahel region and neighbouring countries" series. The study focused on nine countries: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal. The report was jointly prepared with the Small Arms Survey and the Group for Research and Information on Peace and Security.

C. Arms Trade Treaty

26. The Regional Centre participated with the African Union Commission in the organization of a consultative meeting in N'Djamena in May 2017 on the Treaty and its implementation in Central Africa. Other partners included the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the Economic Community of Central African States, the Regional Centre on Small Arms in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and Bordering States and the Small Arms Survey. Twenty national experts from Cameroon, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon and Sao Tome and Principe reviewed the Treaty's principles and provisions, its review mechanisms and progress in its ratification in Central Africa, including assistance available to States parties in the implementation of the Treaty.

27. Within the framework of its ongoing work to address the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in Africa, the Regional Centre provided policy and technical expertise to a workshop for lusophone parliamentarians on the ratification and implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty organized by Parliamentarians for Global Action and hosted by Cabo Verde (18-19 July 2016).

D. Weapons of mass destruction

28. The Regional Centre participated in a regional workshop for Africa on implementing the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction held in in Addis Ababa on 13 and 14 September 2016. The event, organized by the African Union and the Implementation Support Unit for the Convention, prepared and raised the awareness of African Union member States with regard to the Eighth Review Conference of the Convention. The Centre shared its experience on capacity-building in the implementation of the Convention across the African continent.

29. The Regional Centre supported Member States in their efforts to implement instruments relating to weapons of mass destruction, including Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery to non-State actors. The Centre worked to raise the awareness of African States of the implementation of the resolution. The Centre organized a workshop in Niamey on 27 and 28 July 2016 on the drafting of a national export control list at the request of the Government of the Niger. Forty representatives from the Group of Five for the Sahel States took part in the event. The workshop resulted in an outcome document, the Niamey Declaration, which calls for collective regional efforts to promote the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) among the Group's countries.

30. The Regional Centre participated in a seminar organized by the Institute for Security Studies in Addis Ababa on 8 and 9 December 2016 on the theme "Assistance and capacity-building in the context of implementing Security Council resolution 1540 (2004)". The Centre shared its experience concerning provision of technical assistance in support of the implementation of the resolution, including on lessons learned and challenges observed.

E. Information and outreach

31. In cooperation with the International Organization of la Francophonie, the Regional Centre developed a practical guide on disarmament in French for diplomats and experts from African States to strengthen the capacity of francophone countries to engage on issues relating to peace and security, disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation. The guide elaborates on a range of topics related to these issues, including detailed references on international, regional and subregional instruments. The Centre hosted a workshop in Lomé on 13 June 2016 to validate and revise the draft guide with 19 African experts. The guide was published in January 2017, and the Centre will identify and coordinate with national disarmament institutions to disseminate it.

32. As part of the celebrations to mark the International Day of Peace, the Regional Centre, in collaboration with the Government of Togo and UNDP, organized a panel discussion on the theme "Culture of peace and disarmament: a pledge to sustainable development in Africa". The event constituted a platform for exchange and discussions and was attended by over 200 participants from the Togolese authorities, the diplomatic corps, civil society organizations and the media. It served to promote the importance of peace and disarmament in a development context. Discussions were led by representatives of the diplomatic corps and experts in the field.

33. On 26 and 27 January 2017, the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue and the Regional Centre co-organized a travel study programme to Lomé for some 30 youth leaders from Burundi. The programme included modules on various topics relating to peace and disarmament.

34. The Regional Centre's electronic newsletter, "UNREC focus", is distributed to more than 7,300 global subscribers, providing information about regional disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation issues and the initiatives and activities of the Centre. New interactive features were added to the Centre's website, including a resource hub. It currently includes an online database, publications, documents, treaties and fact sheets related to arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation. To date, information gathered has resulted in the compilation of more than 150 documents and 50 Internet links. Such initiatives have increased the traffic to its website, which currently receives an average of 7,000

visitors per month. Furthermore, the Centre maintains an interactive social media platform that provides regular updates and information on its activities.

35. To promote a message of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation for a world of peace, the Regional Centre sent letters, background information and suggestions for activities to all United Nations country teams based in Africa and national authorities inviting them to celebrate Disarmament Week (24-30 October 2016) and the Global Week of Action against Gun Violence (5-12 June 2017).

IV. Financial situation, staffing and administration

A. Financial situation

36. The Regional Centre was established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 40/151 G on the basis of existing resources and voluntary contributions. In 2016, voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund for the Centre were received in the amount of $380,051. Information on the status of the Trust Fund for 2016 is contained in the annex to the present report.

37. The Secretary-General expresses his gratitude to the Government of Cameroon, as well as the European Union and the Economic Community of Central African States, for their financial contributions. The Secretary-General expresses his appreciation to the Government of Togo for its long-standing financial and political support provided in its capacity as host country to the Regional Centre.

38. The Secretary-General continues to encourage financial and in-kind contributions to the Regional Centre from African States as a clear indication of the value that Member States attribute to the Centre's expertise and technical assistance.

39. The Secretary-General thanks all States and partners for their generous contributions to and support for the Regional Centre and encourages their continuous support to ensure that the Centre can continue to provide technical and capacity-building assistance to Member States in the region, at their request, in fulfilment of its mandate.

B. Staffing

40. The regular budget of the United Nations funds the posts of one Senior Political Affairs Office or Director of the Centre (P-5), one Political Affairs Officer (P-3) and two General Service staff (G-7 and G-6 Local level).

41. Project personnel are funded through voluntary contributions. The Secretary-General thanks the European Union for the funding of one Political Affairs Officer (P-3) and two United Nations Volunteers, the Government of Germany for the funding of an Associate Expert in legal affairs and the Government of the United States of America for supporting the cost of a national United Nations Volunteer through the Trust Fund for Global and Regional Disarmament Activities in support of the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004).

V. Conclusion

42. During the reporting period, the Regional Centre continued to carry out its programmes, with the support of donors, to provide assistance to African Member States, at their request, in the areas of peace, security and disarmament and enhanced its collaboration with partners, including the African Union and

subregional organizations, with a view to achieving synergies in promoting disarmament and non-proliferation objectives in Africa.

43. The Regional Centre assisted Member States, at their request, in strengthening their capacity to combat the illicit trade in and proliferation of small arms and light weapons and in implementing instruments relating to weapons of mass destruction and counter-terrorism, including Security Council resolutions 1540 (2004) and 2178 (2014). Furthermore, the Centre engaged in activities relating to the implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction and conducted outreach initiatives to raise awareness of disarmament and non-proliferation issues.

44. The sustained number of requests for assistance from Member States and regional organizations demonstrated the importance of the work of the Regional Centre in the field of disarmament, arms control, non-proliferation and security in the region. Building on its past work and expertise, the Centre continues to develop and implement new projects and activities that meet the needs of Member States on issues within its mandate.

45. In carrying out its programme and activities, the Regional Centre collaborated with key stakeholders, in particular the African Union, and strengthened its continental role by creating networks and partnerships at the regional and subregional levels. The Centre will continue its efforts to maximize the utilization of resources and expertise through cooperation and the sharing of experiences with partner entities in the region.

46. The Secretary-General calls upon Member States and other donors to provide the Regional Centre with the financial and in-kind support necessary to enable it to continue to fulfil its mandate effectively in serving the needs of African Member States in the fields of peace, security and disarmament.

Annex

Status of the Trust Fund for the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa for 2016

(United States dollars)

Accumulated surplus, 1 January 2016	**1 350 652**
Revenue	
Voluntary contributions	380 051[a]
Investment revenue	17 068
Total revenue and prior-year adjustment	**397 119**
Expenses	
Operating expenses	1 249 656
Refunds to donors	32 062[b]
Total expenses	**1 281 718**
Surplus/(deficit)	(884 599)
Accumulated surplus/(deficit)	**466 053**

[a] Consists of voluntary contributions from donors: Economic Community of Central African States, $21,730.07; Cameroon, $7,272.00; European Union, $351,049.05.

[b] Consists of a refund to Germany.